

Britain expels 28 Iraqi diplomats

LONDON (AP) — Britain is expelling 28 diplomats from the Iraqi embassy in London, the Foreign Office said Sunday. Iraqi Ambassador Azim Al Salloum was summoned to the Foreign Office and told to reduce his staff from 22 to four within 24 hours, said a Foreign Office spokeswoman, who requested anonymity. "He was informed that in view of the current state of relations, the level of staff required at the Iraqi embassy was unjustified," the Foreign Office spokeswoman said. She said the Iraqi diplomats' families have a week to leave. The last diplomat at the British embassy in Baghdad left Iraq on Saturday. The career diplomat, Chris Segar, travelled overnight to Amman, and was expected back in Britain within the next couple of days, the spokeswoman said. Britain expelled 73 Iraqis, including eight Iraqi embassy employees, on Jan. 3. The Foreign Office said the expulsions were a defensive move against Iraqi threats to attack targets in the West.

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Bush: Gorbachev still backs U.N. approach

WASHINGTON (R) — President George Bush said Sunday that Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev had confirmed Moscow's support for the United Nations approach in the Gulf. "I believe the Soviet support for the United Nations approach is solid and firm and President Gorbachev told me that not so long ago," Bush told reporters. Asked about news reports from Baghdad Sunday that Iraq would not withdraw from Kuwait by the Jan. 15 U.N. deadline, Bush said: "It doesn't surprise me but they are making a tremendous mistake." Answering Americans who have demonstrated against any possible war in the Gulf, Bush replied: "I say we've got to do what we have to do and the Congress has affirmed that position. One of the arguments that people made was, get Congress involved... both houses of the Congress affirmed the policies of his government."

Ben Bella arrives here

AMMAN (J.T.) — Former Algerian President Ahmed Ben Bella arrived in Amman Sunday on his way to Baghdad to meet Iraqi leaders to discuss the Gulf crisis. Ben Bella visited Iraq and Jordan shortly after the crisis began with Iraq's Aug. 2 invasion of Kuwait. Ben Bella might meet His Majesty King Hussein before flying to Baghdad, according to sources quoted by Reuters.

Iraq lets former Kuwaiti envoy leave

BAGHDAD (Agencies) — Iraq has allowed the former Kuwaiti envoy to leave Baghdad more than five months after his country was invaded by Iraqi troops, an Arab diplomat said. Ambassador Ibrahim Jassim Al Baho was allowed to leave for Jordan a few days ago after an appeal made by His Majesty King Hussein, diplomatic sources said. Al Baho was banned from travel after the invasion and was deprived of his diplomatic status. His children were allowed to leave last September for school in Europe, and he was free to move about without any restrictions in Iraq.

Khaddam in Riyadh

NICOSIA (R) — Syrian Vice-President Abdul Halim Khaddam held talks with Saudi Arabian leaders Sunday shortly after arriving in Riyadh on an unannounced visit, the Saudi Press Agency said. It said Khaddam, who was accompanied by Foreign Minister Farouq Al Sharaa, had talks with Saudi Crown Prince Abdullah and Foreign Minister Saad Al Faisal.

Iranian delegation in Baghdad

BAGHDAD (R) — An Iranian delegation arrived in Iraq Sunday carrying a message from Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati to his Iraqi counterpart Tareq Aziz, the Iraq News Agency said. The Iranians — led by Mostafa Fumani Haeri, head of the foreign ministry's Gulf department — would discuss ways to implement a recent agreement allowing Iranians to visit holy Shi'ite shrines in Iraq, INA added.

34 killed in soccer violence in S. Africa

JOHANNESBURG (AP) — At least 34 people were killed Sunday when violence erupted at a soccer match over a referee's decision, the independent South African Press Association (SAPA) reported. The news agency quoted police as saying the incident occurred at a match near the town of Orkney, about 130 kilometres southwest of Johannesburg. "At the moment, there are 34 dead, but we are still counting," SAPA quoted police as saying. He said there was no indication the violence was politically motivated.

Iranian health minister dismissed

NICOSIA (AP) — Iran's health minister Iraj Fazel was dismissed Sunday for mismanagement of the ministry that led a shortage of medicines and doctors. Tehran Radio said Fazel was dismissed by President Hashemi Rafsanjani after the parliament voted for his dismissal Sunday. Rafsanjani said he was "sorry to see one of my close colleagues go." The report did not elaborate on why Fazel was dismissed. But corruption in the ministry has reportedly led to state-purchased medicines being diverted to the black market, where they are sold at exorbitant prices.

Cairo names envoy to Libya

CAIRO (AP) — Egypt has appointed an ambassador to Libya, a move that signalled the formalisation of diplomatic relations between the two countries, press reports said. Cairo newspapers said Mostafa Al Shazli left for the Libyan capital Tripoli Sunday to assume his post as Egypt's ambassador to the neighbouring country.

God only knows war or peace, U.N. chief says after Iraq talks

Perez de Cuellar heads for meeting with Mitterrand before reporting to council

From Lamis K. Andoni with agency dispatches

UNITED NATIONS Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar flew out of Bagdad after 150 minutes of talks with Iraqi President Saddam Hussein on the outcome of his talks in Bagdad, said President Saddam and Foreign Minister Tareq Aziz had given him "a very clear idea of their positions."

Asked whether there would be war or peace, the veteran Peruvian diplomat answered:

(Continued on page 5)

Saddam replies to Assad's call with invitation to join forces

"Our 19th province has become the field of the showdown which will liberate the (Arab) Nation, God willing," Saddam said in the message.

Assad, urging Saddam to put aside years of enmity, Saturday appealed to the Iraqi president to make a "brave" decision and withdraw from Kuwait to spare the Arabs a destructive war.

Saddam urged Syria instead to switch sides and join with Iraq.

"It will be an event which will be recorded in history if President Hafez Al Assad joins the group of the faithful and reacts with them so that the group will be more powerful," he said.

The field of the 19th province has become a battlefield for the showdown in which the (Arab) Nation will be triumphant and Palestine, the Golan Heights and Lebanon and all the underdogs will be victorious over the U.S. administration, Zionism and corrupt Arabs," said Saddam.

Assad urged Iraq to quit Kuwait in an unusual appeal read by an announcer over Damascus Radio. He called on Saddam to put aside years of enmity between them and to "listen to the advice of a brother."

"I am not making this appeal to embarrass anyone, but I am appealing to a live conscience to deny our enemy the opportunity for which they have been longing," Assad said.

"Israel alone stands to benefit

(Continued on page 5)

Anti-war protests rock Europe; U.S.

BONN (Agencies) — Tens of thousands of anti-war protesters filled Europe's streets for a second straight day Sunday to demand that dialogue replace diatribe in the Gulf standoff.

The demonstrations, from Germany to Spain, came as U.N. Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar met in Bagdad with Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein just two days before the deadline for a pullout from Kuwait.

Pacifists were also reportedly

(Continued on page 2)

Israel says it will hit back if Iraq attacks it

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — Members of the Israeli government said Sunday Israel would retaliate on its own against any attack by Iraq and would not rely on the United States to defend it.

Iraq has vowed to target Israel first if war breaks out in the Gulf.

Health Minister Ehud Olmert, a confidant of Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, told reporters after the weekly cabinet meeting that Israel would strike back if attacked.

"If Israel is attacked, we will react. This is something that must be understood. We do not expect anyone to fight for us. We do not want anyone to protect us. We will do it ourselves,"

(Continued on page 3)

13 die in army violence in Lithuanian capital

VILNIUS. The Soviet Union (Agencies) — Thousands of people chanting "freedom" rallied Sunday outside Lithuania's parliament building after Soviet troops stormed the republic's broadcast station, leaving 13 people dead and 110 injured, Lithuanian officials said.

The United States and the European Community (EC) condemned the predawn Kremlin assault, and high-ranking NATO officials held an emergency meeting in Brussels on the situation. U.S. Secretary of State James Baker said the attack "contradicts the basic principles" of Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev.

Kremlin forces deployed to the secessionist Baltic republic last week to enforce the military draft have taken control of at least seven key buildings in Lithuania.

Lithuanian nationalists built barricades outside the parliament on Sunday in the expectation the Soviet forces would try to seize the building. One Soviet general said such a move was possible.

The Lithuanian news agency

Elta said at least 13 people were killed and 127 wounded in an early morning army raid to seize the Vilnius radio and television centre.

It quoted the health ministry as saying the dead included a 17-year-old youth and a 24-year-old woman run over by a tank.

The troops seized the broadcasting tower after tanks charged at a human shield of young people massed five metres deep around it.

White House Chief of Staff John Sununu Sunday said whether or not President George Bush attends a planned summit in February with Gorbachev could depend on Soviet actions in Lithuania.

"It depends on what happens in the next few hours, the next few days," Sununu told Leslie Stahl on CBS television's Face the Nation.

Soviet "actions could cost the Soviet Union the support of Western Europe and the United States," he added.

Parliament also declared Sunday a day of mourning and asked people to raise flags with black ribbons and ring church bells.

The Lithuanian news agency

All would be losers in war — King

WASHINGTON (Agencies) — His Majesty King Hussein said Sunday in a U.S. television interview that any use of force by a U.S.-led coalition against Iraq would bring disaster to the Arab World and cripple future U.S.-Arab relations.

"You may win one battle but you will lose the entire Arab World," King Hussein said in an interview from Amman on the Cable News Network (CNN).

"No one disputes the power and strength of the United States and the ability to inflict a lot of

damage, but inflicting such damage in this case in a war against an entire Arab people, the Muslim people, and the result would be horrendous," King Hussein said.

"I don't think the future (of U.S.-Arab relations) would be very bright."

The King said all sides would be losers if war breaks out in the Gulf.

If there is war, "in the final analysis I don't think there will be any victor. All of us are going to be losers," he said in the interview with Rowland Evans.

His Majesty King Hussein Sunday meets with Libyan number two Major Abdul Salam Jalloud, who delivered to him a message from Libyan leader Muammar Qaddafi (Petra photo)

Hurd sees slim chance for peace

AMMAN (J.T.) — British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd said Sunday he saw only a slim chance of averting war in the Gulf and called for an early military assault to dislodge Iraq from Kuwait if it refused to leave peacefully.

Hurd said he hoped U.N. Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar could persuade Iraqi President Saddam Hussein to withdraw from the brink of war during peace talks in Bagdad.

"The world is holding its breath obviously for what is happening and what is about to happen in Bagdad," he said.

"There is a chance, not a very strong chance and we all hope that that chance will succeed."

Hurd, the most hawkish U.S. ally in the American-led anti-Iraq coalition, said Iraq had to comply with U.N. demands that it withdraw completely from Kuwait.

"It is essential that (Iraq) shows a clear decision to withdraw and begin to implement that. The practicalities can be discussed by the secretary-general," he said.

But Hurd said the alliance opposing Iraq should strike quickly once the peace option had been exhausted.

"I can't see any reason or prospect of long delay once it becomes clear that the chance of peace we are talking about no longer exists," Hurd said.

He essentially repeated Britain's and the European Community's backing for an international peace conference to tackle the Palestinian issue once Iraq withdrew from Kuwait but again ruled out any suggestion of linkage between the Gulf crisis and the Arab-Israeli conflict.

"We believe that a conference would be an important technique for finding a lasting and just

(Continued on page 5)

Somalia appeals for aid, says fighting receding

CAIRO (Agencies) — Somalia appealed Sunday for food, medicines, blankets and tents, after two weeks of fighting between the army and rebels seeking to overthrow President Mohammad Siad Barre.

Foreign Minister Ahmad Mohammad Aden Qayeb said the capital Mogadishu was returning to normal and insisted the rebels did not threaten the government.

Western countries have shut their embassies in Mogadishu and hundreds of foreigners, including many wounded, have been evacuated.

On Sunday, Egypt's ambassador to Somalia and 67 diplomats and Egyptians flew in to Cairo from Mogadishu on an Egyptian flight.

"The government of Somalia appeals to the international community and world relief agencies to rush humanitarian aid to Somalia which needs food, medicine and other assistance," Qayeb said.

"We need food and medicine, things like blankets and tents... a lot of people have left the city and we need tents for them," he told a news conference.

He said he asked Egypt and Saudi Arabia, which he visited before Cairo, for help and had received a positive response.

The minister denied reports by rebels that Siad Barre had fled. "Siad Barre is working normally from the presidential palace," he said at the end of a two-day visit.

On Saturday, the main rebel

King Hussein painted a bleak picture of any war in the Gulf, citing the cost in human lives and to the environment.

Economically, and for quality of life, a war "is going to set the entire region back," King Hussein said.

He reiterated his vow not to allow any foreign airplanes to use Jordanian air space in a Gulf war.

"We've made it abundantly clear that those who we got in touch in the recent past, many leaders in the world and we publicly stated that our stand is one

of defending our sovereign territory and we will not stand any violations either by land or in the air. We will try our best to prevent them from any part," he said.

The interview was broadcast just hours after U.S. President George Bush thanked Congress for voting to authorise force against Iraq if it does not leave Kuwait by Tuesday.

"Maybe force can achieve some initial results but we would

(Continued on page 5)

King receives Libyan message

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Majesty King Hussein Sunday received a message from Libyan leader Muammar Qaddafi on the Gulf crisis and means to resolve the crisis through peaceful means.

The message was delivered to the King by Major Abdul Salam Jalloud, member of the Libyan Revolutionary Council.

The audience was attended by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, Prime Minister Mudar Badran, Royal Court Chief Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker,

(Continued on page 5)

Details revealed of mechanism for U.N. plan

By Nermene Murad
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — More details emerged Sunday of the framework of a peace plan that U.N. Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar carried with him to Bagdad and, presumably, discussed with Iraqi President Saddam Hussein before heading back to Europe and the U.N. headquarters.

The most outstanding element of the peace proposal, according to U.N. sources who provided the details to the Jordan Times, is that it has a very strong chance and we all hope that that chance will succeed."

Hurd said he hoped U.N. Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar could persuade Iraqi President Saddam Hussein to withdraw from the brink of war during peace talks in Bagdad.

"The world is holding its breath obviously for what is happening and what is about to happen in Bagdad," he said.

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Saudis postpone reform debate till after crisis

RIYADH (R) — Saudi Arabia's ruling family, preoccupied with the Gulf crisis, has put the lid on an internal debate between liberals and conservatives over the Muslim state's social and political future, diplomats and political sources say.

The Al Saud family has persuaded the liberals to wait some months before they again assert their demands for social reform, greater press freedom and wider public participation in the decision-making process.

The authorities have put an end to an overzealous campaign by the mutawas (volunteers), the religious police who monitor the behaviour of women and the observance of Muslim duties such as regular prayers.

Despite conservative pressure, they have appointed a new leader of the organisation, weeding out some of the extremists and channelling more money to the remainder, diplomats said.

Saudi Arabia, as the cradle of Islam, is run on strictly religious lines.

But the debate between liberals and conservatives has long been simmering under the surface of Saudi society.

It heated up again after the invasion of Kuwait last August and the subsequent deployment of U.S. troops in the kingdom.

"It really shook people up. Their world view was collapsing. People were all over the map from the shock," said one Western diplomat.

The liberals saw it as a perfect opportunity to press their case because the crisis disrupted the conservative motion that Saudi Arabia could isolate itself from

the rest of the world.

The sight of U.S. service-women and Kuwaiti refugee women driving cars, which Saudi women cannot do. And the realisation that foreign non-believers, men and women, might end by dying alongside Saudi soldiers also seemed to strengthen the liberal case.

The liberals made all the running in the first three months. The watershed was the women's driving incident on Nov. 6. Then the conservatives made a comeback," said a Saudi liberal.

Conservatives, in tracts handed out at universities and elsewhere, denounced the Saudi women who dared to drive in convoy through the streets of the capital Riyadh.

The ban on women driving has taken on enormous importance in the debate because it is one of the weakest links in the conservative case. The ban has no justification in Islamic law, the immutable basis of Saudi law, and the liberals can cite statistics for the economic damage it does to the Gulf crisis.

The Saudis say Saudi Arabia has to pay tens of thousands of immigrant workers to drive the women around and the ban helps restrict women's access to the job market.

In November, King Fahd promised to revive plans to set up a consultative council, the nearest thing the country is likely to have to a parliament. But the government has given no details and many Saudis doubt it will see the light in the near future.

"Saudi kings have twice

offered a council, on both occasions under pressure, and on both occasions they have quietly forgotten about it when the pressure was off," said a Saudi businessman.

The first time was in 1962, after the royal family deposed King Saud and when radical Egypt was fighting Saudi-backed conservatives in Yemen. The second was after religious extremists occupied the Grand Mosque in the holy city of Mecca in 1979.

The new head of the mutawa, formally known as the Committee for the Promotion of Virtue and the Suppression of Vice, is Abdul Aziz Abdul Rahman Al Said, who is reputed to oppose compulsion in private religious matters such as prayers.

A vigorous mutawa campaign in November against rowdy parties attended by women appears to have come to an end, foreign residents said.

It is unclear what direction the debate will take when it resumes, diplomats say. Diplomats say much will depend on how well the royal family manages the country.

The Saudi family, which controls all key posts in government, has generally followed a policy of cautious liberalisation since the Saudi state was created early this century.

King Faisal in the 1960s and 1970s was one of the most active reformers and some liberals reproach the present king for not pressing hard enough against the conservative lobby.

"But then in King Faisal's day the country had a lot further to go, there was much more reform," said a Saudi executive.



Palestinians throw stones at an Israeli army observation tower in the occupied West Bank.

Bush tells Saddam 'future of Iraq' is at stake

WASHINGTON (R) — President George Bush warned Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein in a letter released Saturday that he will "pay a terrible price" if war comes to the Gulf and that the "future of Iraq" is at stake.

"Iraq cannot and will not be able to hold on to Kuwait or exact a price for leaving," Bush said in the letter that Iraqi Foreign Minister Tareq Aziz had refused to accept from U.S. Secretary of State James Baker at talks last Wednesday in Geneva.

In direct, forceful language, Bush tells Saddam: "We stand today at the brink of war between Iraq and the world," and that Iraq's full compliance with U.N. resolutions demanding it pull out of Kuwait by Jan. 15 will allow the Iraqi military to "escape destruction."

Following is the text of the letter that Bush wrote to President Saddam on Jan. 5.

The White House initially refused to release it, but handed out this text on Saturday, saying that many segments of it already had been quoted by news organisations:

"Mr. President:

"We stand today at the brink of war between Iraq and the world. This is a war that began with your invasion of Kuwait; this is a war that can be ended only by Iraq's full and unconditional compliance with U.N. Security Council Resolution 678.

"I am writing you now, directly, because what is at stake demands that no opportunity be lost to avoid what would be a certain calamity for the people of Iraq. I am writing, as well, because it is said by some that you do not understand just how isolated Iraq is and what Iraq

faces as a result.

"I am not in a position to judge whether this impression is correct; what I can do, though, is try in this letter to reinforce what Secretary of State Baker told your foreign minister and eliminate any uncertainty or ambiguity that might exist in your mind about where we stand and what we are prepared to do.

"The international community is united in its call for Iraq to leave all of Kuwait without condition and without further delay. This is not simply the policy of the United States; it is the position of the world community as expressed in no less than 12 Security Council resolutions.

"We prefer a peaceful outcome. However, anything less than full compliance by the United Nations Security Council Resolution 678 and its predecessors is unacceptable.

"There can be no reward for aggression. Nor will there be any negotiation. Principle cannot be compromised. However, by its full compliance, Iraq will gain the opportunity to rejoin the international community.

"More immediately, the Iraqi military establishment will escape destruction. But unless you withdraw from Kuwait completely and without condition, you will lose more than Kuwait.

"What is at issue here is the future of Kuwait — it will be free, its government will be restored — but rather the future of Iraq. This choice is yours to make.

"The United States will not be separated from its coalition partners. Twelve Security Council resolutions, 28 countries providing military units to enforce them, more than 100 governments complying with sanctions — all

highlight the fact that it is not Iraq against the United States, but Iraq against the world.

"That most Arab and Muslim countries are arrayed against you as well should reinforce what I am saying. Iraq cannot and will not be able to hold on to Kuwait or exact a price for leaving.

"You may be tempted to find solace in the diversity of opinion that is American democracy. You should resist any such temptation. Diversity ought not to be confused with division. Nor should you underestimate, as others have before you, America's will.

"Iraq is already feeling the effects of the sanctions mandated by the United Nations. Should war come, it will be a far greater tragedy for you and your country.

"We prefer a peaceful outcome. However, anything less than full compliance with U.N. Security Council Resolution 678 and its predecessors is unacceptable.

"There can be no reward for aggression. Nor will there be any negotiation. Principle cannot be compromised. However, by its full compliance, Iraq will gain the opportunity to rejoin the international community.

"The American people would demand the strongest possible response. You and your country will pay a terrible price if you order unconscionable acts of this sort.

"I write this letter not to threaten, but to inform. I do so with no sense of satisfaction, for the people of the United States have no quarrel with the people of Iraq.

"Mr. President, U.N. Security Council Resolution 678 establishes the period before Jan. 15 of this year as a 'pause of good will' so that this crisis may end without further violence.

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Palestinians fear mass expulsions if Gulf war starts

By Sami Aboudi

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (R)

— Palestinian nationalist leaders have told European consultants in Jerusalem they feared Israel might try to force masses of Arabs from the occupied territories if war erupted in the Gulf.

Israeli security sources flatly denied any such plans.

Five Palestinians, including

Faisal Al Husseini, the most

senior leader in the West Bank

and Gaza Strip, appealed for

international protection in a

news conference after meeting

the European diplomats.

Husseini said Palestinian fears were based on information from foreign and Israeli groups and the occupation authorities to implement transfer during the war.

"Transfer" is a euphemism for mass expulsion of Palestinians from the West Bank and Gaza to Jordan.

Palestinian leaders said Israel

could use one of many scenarios

either to justify the direct expul-

sion of Arabs or scare people

into fleeing.

"We would like to make it clear here that the Israelis will

feel no one if they try to make

accusations saying that Palesti-

nians are attacking the Israeli

army to implement their policy,"

Husseini said.

Rana Nashashibi said: "Our

experience with the Israelis

caused us this anxiety

because even with world atten-

tion focused on the occupied

territories and during the intifada,

this has not stopped the

Israelis from deportations and...

all kinds of atrocities against us."

Israel has expelled 62 Palesti-

nians, including four this week,

since the revolt against Israeli

occupation erupted 37 months

ago.

Israel is concerned that Palestinians might step up attacks against soldiers and civilians if a Gulf war erupted.

Security sources say the army would move quickly to crush any sign of rebellion but the action would not include mass expul-

"The most drastic measures is

to change to the open fire reg-

ulations," one security source

said.

The Israeli army's judge-advoca-

te general said Saturday that

troops patrolling the Gulf area to help

enforce a U.N. trade embargo

against Iraq.

Security sources said troops

would be authorised to shoot to

kill and impose a curfew on the

occupied territories.

Husseini said that some Israeli

groups were planning to use the

war atmosphere to expel Palesti-

nians.

The Peace Now movement

Wednesday sent a letter to the

Israeli army chief saying it had

information that Jewish settlers

serving in the army in the occu-

pied areas would try to scare

Palestinians into leaving their

homes if war breaks out.

Iraq has threatened to strike

at Israel if it comes under attack

from a U.S.-led multinational

coalition. The United Nations

has given Baghdad a Jan. 15

deadline to quit Kuwait or face a

war.

Church leaders in Jerusalem

appealed to U.S. President

George Bush and Iraqi President

Saddam Hussein Saturday to

avoid war.

"On the occasion of the visit

of the secretary general of the

United Nations to Baghdad, we

Where the hacks are eager to fly

Journalists want to be in Baghdad but things are not necessarily going their way, **Mariam Shahin** reports

AMMAN — Most foreign journalists have left or are leaving Baghdad and some are even preparing to depart from Jordan as the Jan. 15 United Nations Security council deadline for Iraq to pull out of Kuwait is only a day away.

Fearing that Baghdad and possibly Jordan could be "attacked" if fighting should erupt, some journalists are bowing out of the "media war" which they themselves have helped to create since Aug. 2.

Professional considerations, corporate policies and insurance problems are all part of the current media dilemma of whether "to go to Baghdad, stay there or here or not to do so. But some media people say it is simply a question of "whether covering this conflict from the war front is a story worth dying for."

So, who is staying in Baghdad? Who is going? Why? Or why not?

For the most part, the major American television networks are still there while many major European networks have relocated "for the moment" to Amman. The close to half a dozen Japanese network crews are reportedly leaving Baghdad around Jan. 16 to relocate also to Amman till further notice.

While most print journalists who are still in Baghdad are booked on packed planes returning to Jordan, news agency writers and television agencies, such as World Television Network (WTN) and Visnews, are staying on to file their reports. Most, if not all journalists, covering the crisis from Amman or other places will undoubtedly rely on these agency reports for their reporting and analysis.

According to most Western journalists "access in Baghdad is not so easy" and many say they can almost "cover the stories from here."

TV is favoured.
Having to wait days, weeks

and sometimes months for a visa to Iraq, the ministry of information in Baghdad has in fact discouraged many print and radio journalists from covering the story from the Iraqi front. So, as one European print journalist put it, "I have a good excuse for not going."

Indeed complaints by print and radio journalists that they are discriminated against in favour of the "television mafia" by the Iraqi ministry of information, which decides who gets a visa and who does not, have been rampant since the crisis began nearly six months ago.

"All the Iraqis care about is television," claimed one angry journalist working for a major European newspaper who has been waiting for weeks to get a visa.

Why stay?

While some see the continued presence of some (and they are a few) Western television networks in Iraq as a sign that "there will be no war, because the Americans will have an idea when it will 'boom,'" others feel differently.

"Even if Iraq or Baghdad is hit, the American network and agency networks will want it on film. What good is hitting Baghdad if you can't show it on TV?" Asked one obvious fan of "realpolitik" who works for a network agency who will stay in Baghdad far beyond Jan. 15.

While at least the four major American channels (ABC, CBS, NBC and CNN) intend to stay on in Baghdad until they are told "to pull out" by their network chiefs back home, most European and Japanese networks are weighing their possible losses.

For the most part, networks are scheduled to decide about the fate of their "teams in Baghdad" sometime today or

tomorrow. At least one team from each BBC, Dutch, French and Spanish televisions is still in Iraq, according to their colleagues in Amman.

All flights out of Baghdad are fully booked and many journalists, as well as television and radio networks, have already made several travel plans and arranged for journeys by car to leave Jordan in case it is drawn into the conflict.

While most western European, Japanese and "other" television networks and journalists have opted for an "American bureau" from which they can monitor agency reports and footage coming out of Baghdad, some feel that American could be as dangerous as Baghdad if war breaks out. According to a random survey by the Jordan Times, however, those journalists planning to leave Jordan soon are still a small minority.

"It's clearly a question of racism," said the correspondent. "The message was that she is not one of us so she is dispensable."

"We are told to act professionally and walk in there, no masks, no insurance, nothing," said one freelancer. "But I think in this case it's the networks being unprofessional."

Many Arabs, Africans and non-Western Europeans have clearly said that racism is involved in the behaviour of some major American and European networks.

"The racism that has surfaced in the media world is directed against they very people who help them get the scoops and who risk their lives to prove themselves. This has underlined the causes of the current crisis," one veteran media observer said.

"They send us, freelancers, in because they want to see what is going on in Baghdad and it looks good for the ratings," said one freelancer working for an American network. "But our lives are worth nothing because they are often not required to insure us for our lives," he added.

Many non-Western freelancers and contract correspondents camera-men and sound technicians have also commented that the networks and newspaper syndicates are less "worried about risking the lives of non-Americans and non-Europeans in this conflict."

"This is because some people got the raw end of the deal for damn too long and said 'hell I won't take it anymore,'" he continued.

"We are willing to go to Baghdad, but give us the same gas masks that you give our American colleagues and give us the same insurance policy protection and we will do your dirty work for you," said one non-American "contract correspondent."

Backing the claim that networks often discriminate against not only freelancers but also against non-Europeans and non-Americans, one European said he was greatly disturbed by the treatment by his network of a Lebanese female colleague. "While the 'nationals' get gas masks she does not," he told the Jordan Times.

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KING RECEIVES CREDENTIALS — Two newly-appointed ambassadors to Jordan Sunday presented their credentials to His Majesty King Hussein at separate ceremonies held at Ragheda Palace. (Above) is Ambassador A. Percy Sherwood of Canada who succeeds Michael Bell who ended his duty in Amman in September. (Below) is Dr. Heinrich Reimers of West Germany who succeeds Hervé Bartels who had served as Bonn's ambassador here since 1985. Attending the two ceremonies were Chief of the Royal Court Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker and the King's Political Advisor Adnan Abu Odeh as well as chief chamberlain Prince Raad Ben Zeid.



King discusses Gulf crisis with Yemeni president and Gandhi

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein Sunday conferred with the phone with former Indian prime minister Rajiv Gandhi on the Gulf crisis and the need to reach a peaceful settlement to it.

The King paid tribute to the great efforts made by Gandhi and his group, which includes a num-

ber of politicians, to reach a peaceful settlement.

Saturday the King received a telephone call from Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh, who discussed with him the Gulf crisis and the efforts being made to find a peaceful settlement to it.

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Need to be prepared

WHETHER WAR is on or off it is only rational that the country's civil defence capabilities be stepped up for any eventuality. It took an event the magnitude of the Gulf crisis to awaken Jordan to the need for better preparedness for war. As a matter of fact with the Israeli military threat being what it is, Jordan's civilians should always be better prepared for any emergency or eventuality. It is comforting that Jordan has established a Higher Council of Civil Defence with the specific mandate of organising and synchronising all national efforts in civil defence operations.

The remaining question is why it took the government so long to involve the people in the necessary training for any war situation. Given the fact that Jordan has literally been in a state of alert since the eruption of the Kuwaiti situation, one wonders why the degree of national preparedness in civil defence was only belatedly felt by our authorities. Perhaps there is no need for gas masks, for example, because it is felt that Jordan is not likely to be targeted with such weapons by any side, yet the country should have also discussed and debated such a scenario even if it is deemed remote by our military experts. Only recently Jordanian television started screening ways for effective civil defence. It is ironic that such dissemination of vital information on civil defence is taking place only hours before the U.N. deadline for an Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait expires. Most Jordanians would still be taken by surprise should armed hostilities break out in the Gulf region and spread to the rest of the Middle East and would not know what to do about it. Even the most basic information on civil defence is still wantonly lacking. It is regrettable that prior to the school break for the winter holidays no effort whatsoever was made to educate children on even rudimentary civil defence procedures.

But better late than never. The concerned authorities are now in full gear doing all they can to start the process of appropriate civil defence for the entire country. The idea of establishing committees in various ministries is also a step in the right direction. It stands to reason that any effective civil defence operations must be multi-disciplinary. The Civil Defence Department (CDD) can still spearhead such multifaceted efforts given its wide experience in such endeavours. Amman has always been optimistic that war will never occur in the Gulf region. That sense of optimism stems from Jordan's inner conviction that man can never descend to the level of waging war when war is not necessary. Jordanians will cling to this faith in man's sanity till they are proven wrong. The next few days, however, would either vindicate us or prove us wrong. In either case, civil defence is something over which none of us can gamble.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

IT is premature to predict the outcome of U.N. Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar's visit to Baghdad although the U.N. chief had expressed optimism over his Baghdad mission, said *Al Rai* Arabic daily Sunday. But one can only wonder if such a mission will succeed in the light of the hostile activities on the part of the foreign secretaries of Britain and the United States which aim at sabotaging de Cuellar's bid to end the crisis in the Gulf by peaceful means, the paper noted. Both London and Washington are beating the drums of war, escalating tension and ignoring Iraq's demand for a settlement to the Palestine problem on equal footing with the Gulf crisis, the paper said. Needless to say that de Cuellar's mission depends largely on what the U.N. chief is presenting to the Iraqi president, who does not object to a settlement to the Gulf crisis if the United Nations is ready to deal with other crisis by the same criteria, the paper added. De Cuellar should realise, said the paper, that settling the Arab-Israeli dispute and ending the Palestine problem concerns the United Nations organisation which is under obligation to implement its own resolutions as it is now doing in the case of the Gulf crisis and the Security Council resolutions taken in that regard. It said that de Cuellar realises too well that the West Bank and the Gaza Strip are occupied territories and that Israel has rejected all United Nations resolutions calling for a withdrawal of Israeli forces from occupied Arab lands. But it should be noted at the same time, the paper continued, that the Iraqi leaders will no doubt listen carefully to the U.N. chief because they are seriously concerned with peace not war and the beating of drums by London and Washington can by no means prevent the U.N. mission from attaining success if it is based on right and justice.

It is Iraq's right to launch an attack on Israel in the event of a foreign attack on Iraqi territory as has been declared openly by the Iraqi leaders, says columnist Mahmoud Rimawi Sunday. By waging a military strike against Israel, Iraq will be implementing U.N. Security Council resolutions which call for Israel to pull out its forces from the occupied Arab territories. Since the United States and its allies are basing their threat and directing their forces against Iraq to force it to pull out from Kuwait, the Arabs have all the right to force Israel to withdraw from occupied Palestine by the same standard and criteria, says the writer. Again, in the event of a U.S. attack on Iraq, the Iraqi leadership has the full right to conclude that Israel is an accomplice in that aggression since it is America's strategic ally, a fact that has been corroborated in the Israeli wars against the Arabs since 1956, says Rimawi. He notes that in any attack on Iraq the Americans must surely base their logistics and other considerations on the help they get from the Jewish state, which in fact represents America's base in the Arab region. Iraq has the right to come to the aid of the Palestinians struggling to regain their freedom and has all the right to launch a pre-emptive strike on Israel to prevent the latter from attacking Iraqi targets, the writer stresses. He says Washington which has been supporting Israel's occupation of Palestinian lands over the past 23 years must expect that its strategic ally in the region will be targeted by Iraqi forces in the event of any war in the region.

Weekly Political Pulse

RJ deserves better

ONE wonders what are the real motives behind tightening the blockade on Jordan by all countries, its traditional allies. First came the clampdown on Jordan's only sea outlet, the port of Aqaba. Ships to and from Aqaba are now regularly and systematically harassed by the champions of free navigation on the high seas. After so many months of interference in Jordan's shipping connection, Jordanian people have become stoic. It is viewed as a part of a bigger and broader picture depicting widespread gloom. So when the chips are down for the country and its people, is it the right time to punch holes in Jordan's national airline, Royal Jordanian, when it is the country's only remaining contact with the outside world, with the exception of one or two other airlines? Is it right to rejoice in the woes of Royal Jordanian and make false predictions that it is going under. For sure Royal Jordanian

has many problems. But these problems were inherited not made. It is selling planes to make ends meet. It is not making profits and can barely stand on its feet. But does such a state of health justify the call by some that it should be liquidated? How could it be sensible to ask, now of all times, when the country is besieged that an airline company that served the country and its people for decades should go? Instead of calling for the dismantling of an important Jordanian institution to which many Jordanians have contributed, would it not be better and wiser to offer some prudent prescription for correcting whatever malaise it may be suffering from? If I were told to see the demise of my country's national airline, I would rather predict that the wrongs in the company can still be rectified. I made it a point recently to check on RJ's situation.

I was told on good authority

that RJ is not bad with the airline. The figures cited portray a rosier picture than some would want us to believe. One does not need to be an economist to comprehend where the airline is heading. To begin with, there is hardly an airline in the world today which is not suffering. If two giant airlines, Pan Am and TWA, are contemplating merger in view of the dire economic conditions facing airlines worldwide, RJ cannot be blamed for worrying. The main objective now is to keep our airline afloat morally and materially. For this purpose it is imperative that one has a broad perspective of what RJ is all about. To begin with it is an ordinary airline established solely to make a profit. The airline's goals and objectives go beyond these considerations.

What we are talking about is an airline which is assuming burdens and responsibilities that go beyond the normal call

of duty. It is a fact that RJ is promoting tourism in the country and has incurred so many extraneous expenses for no other reason than to help out the tourism industry of Jordan. How many folkloric activities has RJ assumed at a considerable expense to itself for the avowed purpose of promoting tourism and selling Jordan as a touristic attraction to the far reaches of the world? How many exhibitions and social and cultural events has the airline sponsored and borne the expenses of? RJ has been a cargo carrier for many Jordanian markets including agricultural markets at a time when Aqaba became blockaded by naval ships. If one chooses to scrutinise the company on the basis of raw economic terms, then a fair and balanced analysis is called for as well. The 1980s in Jordan have been characterised as years of a continuing recession. In 1988 the dinar underwent

drastic devaluation that made imports doubly expensive. Fuel costs went up a great deal for RJ because it had to pay for it in the depreciated currency.

Political instability in the region has haunted the airline right from the beginning. Considerable investment was made on its fleet in the early 80s yet the repayments on the loans to purchase them was somehow never reflected in the budgets of the golden era of the airline. The payments on these loans have now accumulated at a time when, for political reasons beyond the control of the airline, the management cannot make them without support from the government. For the government to refrain from helping the airline make the necessary payments now would mean the forfeiting of the payments already made on them. Besides, payments would not absolve the government from responsibility be-

cause it is the guarantor. The government made a wise decision to rescue Petra Bank to the tune of JD 250 million. Why is it now unwilling to help RJ face the formidable economic difficulties it is now facing for no fault of its own? Suffice to recall that RJ was projected to more than break even in 1990. Then came Aug. 2, and everything changed. The Gulf crisis brought to a halt the tourism business and interrupted the normal flow of air traffic through Amman. It also caused insurance rates and fuel prices to reach new heights. It would seem utterly irresponsible to think now in terms of starting all over again and build a new airline under a new name. Jordan has invested so many years to build up the name and image of RJ to the extent that it has become respected worldwide. To start a new company now would mean that all the efforts of the last decades for RJ would go down the drain.

Better to persevere with sanctions than launch all-out war

By Paul H. Nitze and Michael F. Stafford

WASHINGTON — All-out war in the Gulf would not necessarily discourage other potential aggressors. Defeating Saddam Hussein promptly in an all-out war would send an unequivocal signal that this aggression had not been tolerated. But if casualties were high, U.S. sentiment probably would be driven toward a more isolationist posture.

Many Americans would be dismayed by the carnage and resentful that allies were not paying a similar price. (The seeds of such resentment already exist.) They could be expected to oppose any comparable U.S. role in the future. The message would be that the United States had neither the inclination to work in concert with other countries nor the stomach to repeat the anti-Iraq action. Other states — including Saudi Arabia, Jordan and Egypt — could be destabilised, with strong internal forces rising in opposition, enraged by their governments' collaboration with Americans who had killed thousands of their Arab brothers.

In all this ferment, U.S. influence could be reduced to shoring up friendly regimes, if America had the stomach for it. All these troubles would be exacerbated if Saddam were to succeed in drawing Israel into the war.

And with instability in the Middle East, oil supplies would remain quite uncertain. If Syria or Iran replaced Iraq as the potentially dominant regional power, or if friendly governments in Saudi Arabia and other oil-producing states were overthrown by hostile, fundamentalist groups, sup-

pplies would be threatened once more.

Finally, a well executed attack on Iraq could sharply set back its efforts to acquire weapons of mass destruction, but also create problems elsewhere in the region. The crisis has already had this effect; the Saudis, for example, are reported to be seeking to buy a nuclear weapon. The increased regional instability after a war could only heighten these incentives.

□

In sum, the all-out war option seems highly counterproductive in the long term and, certainly not worth the thousands of lives it would cost. Much more promising is continued reliance on sanctions.

First, successful sanctions would be most likely to produce a stable world order.

Critical to this outcome is that a substantially lower level of violence would be more likely to result in continued public support for an active U.S. international role.

Second, this option would likely be less disruptive to regional stability. Any approach that left much of Iraq's military

capability intact would produce a need to retain a peacekeeping force on the front lines, either in Kuwait or in Saudi Arabia, and perhaps elsewhere. While internal destabilisation in other countries of the region would remain a concern, this threat would be lower than that produced by all-out war, especially if the peacekeeping force were primarily Arab.

Third, although oil supplies would remain uncertain, America would be better able to reduce its vulnerability to disruption of those supplies. The key is the U.S. strategic petroleum reserve, which provides an assured source of oil that can be used to make up supply shortfalls or dampen price increases that an unfriendly state might ask to impose.

The reserve already holds almost 600 million barrels, enough to increase market supply by more than 3 million barrels a day (more than the United States imports from all Arab OPEC members) for as long as six months. For about \$15 billion, or a fraction of the estimated cost of a prompt, all-out war, Washington could increase the reserve to the 1

billion barrels recommended by most experts. In the longer term, Washington could impose an oil tariff to induce conservation (while also generating revenues) and reverse cutbacks in development of alternative energy sources.

Finally, the key to halting proliferation in the region lies not merely with what America does in this immediate crisis but rather in a sustained campaign among potential suppliers to cut off sources of critical materials and technical cooperation.

Successful sanctions would be most likely to encourage such a campaign, but they must be supplemented by provisions for continued inspections by the International Atomic Energy Agency and additional U.N. inspections to ensure that supplies remain stemmed.

On all counts, therefore, sanctions — supplemented by air strikes if necessary — promise to serve U.S. interests better than a prompt, all-out war.

Some argue that the threat of all-out war is the key element in the U.S. approach — a weapon in itself — and that Saddam must be convinced that the use of overwhelming

force is imminent before he will back down. Arguments that question the all-out war option, they contend, undermine that strategy. But the momentum toward such a war, whose results threaten to be so costly, may have become dangerously irreversible. War may occur whether it serves U.S. purposes or not.

For the past generation, Americans have regretted that in Vietnam they let the passions of the moment and a lack of healthy scepticism toward presidential claims obscure a clear-headed assessment of national interests. The result was that Washington was driven into a costly, divisive and ultimately counterproductive expansion of a war that lacked adequate public support. Let's not spend the next generation wondering how we came to repeat that mistake.

Mr. Nitze served in the Reagan administration as special adviser on arms control. Mr. Stafford is executive director of the Centre for Science and International Affairs at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard. They contributed this comment to *The Washington Post*.

A gathering sense of futility in the Gulf

By Roger Morris

SANTA FE, New Mexico — While the timetable clicks on inexorably in the Gulf, there is a gathering sense of irrelevance about the stark option to which Washington is reduced. Neither war nor a last-minute diplomatic device will resolve the deeper issues that have brought us to this bleak rendezvous in the desert.

Whatever the outcome in Geneva, the administration's choices between battle and backing down betray an underlying futility — and thus carry the seeds of future crisis.

Neither military action nor a status-quo-ante peace will remedy the incipient turmoil of Arabia, where the vast disparity between rich and poor creates bitter conflict within and among states, where a U.S. "victory" by arms or ultimatum will only strengthen bellicose forces such as Iran and Syria while hastening American upheavals.

Now can Washington bomb or negotiate away the malignant oil dependence of Europe, Japan and the United States, which makes this episode such a reckoning on past negligence. No smart weapons or shrewd bargains will alter the caprice of petroleum politics or the inequities inflicted by the oil market on poor countries.

Just as some showdown with Saddam Hussein will not release the resources needed for development and social peace in the Middle East, it will waste precious billions amid a deepening economic agony in the United States.

Nothing in George Bush's strategy promises a creative initiative on the anachronistic Israeli-Palestinian conflict, at once symbol and substance of

the larger crisis. No success now envisioned by the White House, whether through blood or through bluster, purges that poison, and any success will probably only deepen it.

Least of all do President Bush's options genuinely serve the heralded new world order, the beckoning image of a post-cold war consortium of nations in which the president has wrapped his venture and for which thousands of Americans may soon die.

With its preponderance of U.S. forces in front of token, rear-guard allies, the martial assembly in the Gulf may be the precedent for future Punk expeditions by the Pentagon but scarcely for a new peacekeeping coalition.

Washington's corridor cajolery and economic-political blackmail, simply to gather resolutions and fig-leaf contingents, have hardly lent fresh legitimacy to the United Nations. In its reflexive resort to Great Power extortion, the White House squandered an opportunity for antheatic progress toward multilateral responsibility.

It is not merely that American men and women constitute a de facto mercenary force for the Germans, Japanese, Saudis and Gulf sheiks, or that the Soviets, Chinese and others are absent. Just as national units of the Gulf force cannot even talk to one another effectively in the field, Western diplomacy has been fractured. The European Community, like the Arabs before them, is trying desperately to mount a mediation behind Washington's posturing and media polemics.

The Gulf alliance reflects a sadly outmoded concept of collective security. There is no true collection of interests, no

makes Washington's expected victory in the Gulf already so Pyrrhic.

The ultimate irony is that the crisis presents a chance to deal with fundamental challenges of the post-cold war world. In the grim concentration of international attention, these last days of peace afford an opportunity such as no other in this century, and a singular moment for American statesmanship.

A comprehensive and farsighted American peace effort would begin with authentic negotiations with Baghdad, not to reward aggression but to see it in proportion and to look beyond to ethnic, territorial and economic grievances dating to the Ottoman Empire. Iraq would be given equitable national treatment on disputed petroleum and access to the Gulf. Kuwaiti sovereignty would be restored under U.N. auspices, with an end to predatory oil practices.

U.S. and allied armies would be withdrawn in favour of U.N. buffer forces. The price of Iraq's violence would be the dismantling of its threatening arsenals, although this would be part of a larger regional settlement in which concessions would be security for all sides.

Washington would let the European Community take the lead on the Palestinian issue, recognising the Europeans' stake and credibility as well as setting a precedent for shared responsibility. Simultaneously, every resource of U.S. diplomacy would be applied to forging a united Arab commitment to settlement, to ridding Israel of its indispensable enemy by pan-Arab militarisation, on the model of Mikhail Gorbachev's arms initiatives toward the United States.

To Israel the United States would pledge, by a joint resolution of Congress, that any invasion of its pre-1967 territory (excluding Gaza) would be equivalent to an attack on the United States, requiring full U.S. defence. The United States would urge the United Nations, and particularly the Soviet Union to join it. But with or without their participation, the American commitment would be unequivocal.

If Israel failed to join promptly in European-sponsored negotiations, it would be the U.S. position that America's principled support does not extend to mutual suicide and that Israel would be economically sanctioned, like any other international obstructor.

To the Palestinians the United States would pledge its matching commitment to the establishment and integrity of a sovereign state on West Bank and Gaza, in return for an immediate end to the intifada and prompt settlement negotiations. As with Israel, Palestinian hostilities under any guise would bring new, U.S.-sponsored international sanctions.

Washington would lead a world consortium to provide special aid to Jordan, and technical and educational assistance to Palestine, enabling them to gain their peaceful equilibrium.

Civil rights of Arab citizens in Israel and Jewish citizens in Palestine, along with the multi-cultural status of Jerusalem, would be enforced by the United Nations, a first act of the new world order.

The United States and other wealthier nations would press for a new Middle East commonwealth — the ancient, concept of a shared land and re-

sources, economic and spiritual.

A regional development bank would equitably redistribute from rich Arab nations to poor, away from chaos toward equity and vested interests in peace. The United States would support a Middle Eastern community, Arab and Jew, no less than it supported European unity, and for similar historical reasons.

An ongoing Middle East de-militarisation conference, nuclear and conventional, would be convoked by U.S. leadership through the United Nations, on the principle of "trust but verify," with international inspection of all states. Regional arms control would parallel U.S.-Soviet-European arms reductions.

The White House would launch at home a programme for energy diversification and alternative fuels, aimed not only at domestic realignment but also at international conservation, conversion, and planetary management of scarce resources, environmental

King

(Continued from page 1)

be plunged into disastrous affairs that would last many, many years," the King said.

King Hussein said that Washington had not provided a promised \$2 billion to \$2.5 billion in aid to support economic sanctions against Iraq.

He said Jordan had complied with the sanctions.

King Hussein said he disagreed with a statement by Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak that Iraqi troops would be reluctant to fight a ground war without air power behind them.

"I do not agree with him on this point," King Hussein said. "... I think that people will defend their territory to the best of their ability and they will be extremely determined."

Saying the Gulf problem was both an Arab and international one, the King said he had "secured in the first 48 hours (of the crisis) an Iraqi commitment to withdraw from Kuwait," and to attend a conference on Middle East issues, but that others did not "keep up with the agreement."

In reply to a question the approach of U.S. President George Bush to the crisis, the King said:

"I cannot certainly speak for the president, but I certainly have had some very strange language throughout this crisis. Yet on the other hand, I do think that I was correct when from the beginning when I predicted that the language of threats and intimidation will not produce the desired results. I still think that there is a chance and we are going to do everything we can to avert war if given the chance. After all, I don't believe in very wildest dreams that anybody can be happy about the prospect of thousands and thousands of people dying and other suffering in and the disaster occurring on such a magnitude...."

Details

(Continued from page 1)

The five members of the Security Council would then issue a statement pledging that Iraq will not be attacked.

Immediately following this step Iraq would start its withdrawal from Kuwait to be replaced by United Nations forces which will oversee the return of the emir of Kuwait and the holding of what was described by the source as "some form of self-expression by Kuwaiti citizens." The source insisted that the word "elections" was not mentioned at this point.

Simultaneously the economic sanctions against Iraq would be lifted, but military sanctions would remain in place for at least another six months.

Following the withdrawal of Iraqi forces from Kuwait, the president of the U.N. Security Council would issue a statement calling for the convening of an international peace conference on the Middle East "at the earliest convenient time."

A call to start negotiations for the disarmament of "chemical, biological and nuclear" weapons from the region would be issued by the Security Council at the same time.

The sources said that the emir of Kuwait had given his approval for the part of the plan which allows for his re-

turn to his country and allowing the "self-expression" to take place.

The sources also added that the U.S. had officially accepted the different elements of the peace plan as proposed by Mr. Perez de Cuellar.

The Libyan envoy said he had yet to fully discuss the initiative with other Arab leaders.

thought."

"Our aim is to preserve the Iraqi forces and regime and to find an Arab solution," Jalloud told reporters.

The Libyan envoy said he had yet to fully discuss the initiative with other Arab leaders.

He said Libya would stand by Jordan's side in case it was attacked by Israel.

Hurd

(Continued from page 1)

In an arrival statement Jalloud, who will also visit Iraq, noted that the region is "currently facing a great challenge," and that the results of such challenge will affect the Arab region tremendously. "Therefore we either have to step forward or fall back, God forbid," Jalloud said.

"When Iraq took over Kuwait, some of us might have stood by or resisted this Iraqi step but following the entry of American and foreign forces into the Gulf, Arabs have no choice but to support Iraq against the foreign forces," he said.

Libya's position should a war break out in the Gulf, Jalloud said, will have to be decided by Libyan people's committees.

Jalloud called on all international forces, including the United States, to realize that the Gulf crisis is an inter-Arab affair which should be handled by the Arabs themselves.

Reports have suggested that a French-Arab initiative to resolve the Gulf crisis would be presented soon. The initiative is said to have been prepared by the Arab Maghreb Union and France.

Jalloud said he could not speak about details of the plan now.

He voiced hope that the Soviet Union would embark on an action to find a peaceful settlement to the crisis. He was referring to a decision adopted by the Soviet Parliament calling on President Mikhail Gorbachev to work towards finding a peaceful settlement of the Gulf crisis.

Jalloud described the decision as an extremely important and an indicator of the Soviet leadership's interest in finding a peaceful settlement.

Gadhafi spoke on the telephone Saturday with French President Francois Mitterrand, Italian Prime Minister Giulio Andreotti and Spanish Prime Minister Felipe Gonzales.

According to the Libya news agency JANA, "Gadhafi urged them to make a serious efforts to save world peace and work to extract a positive stand from Iraq which will encourage the convening of an emergency and expanded Security Council in Geneva in which Middle East and Mediterranean basin countries take part."

JANA described Jalloud's trip as part of a "last attempt to save the people of Iraq and to spare the world the disaster of destruction."

Jalloud, before leaving Amman, said he discussed with King Hussein a Libya peace initiative for the Gulf crisis which he said bore an "Arab outlook."

Asked if his plan was similar to that of the U.N. Secretary general, now in Baghdad, he said: "(Javier) Perez de Cuellar represents a moral authority but his initiative carries the ideas of the West and America."

"We are offering an initiative from an Arab outlook and our aim is to delay war as a first step to get it out from our political

settlement," he said, but he added: "This is not a subject in which Saddam Hussein has a particular role."

Hurd was received by His Majesty King Hussein and His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan in the presence of Prime Minister Mudar Badran, Royal Court Chief Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker, the King's Political Advisor Adnan Abu Odeh and Foreign Minister Taher Al Masri.

Before his departure from Amman, Hurd said he discussed with the King ways to solve the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Hurd, before leaving for Ankara for another round of talks on the Gulf crisis, said his meeting with King Hussein, which he described as "very useful" had also focused on trying to achieve progress on the Palestinian issue.

"We spent some time considering the prospects for progress on the Arab-Israeli dispute which we both agreed should be tackled with great energy," Hurd said.

He said he had also discussed the region's "strategic and economic future" with King Hussein.

Hurd said that Britain believes that an international conference is a good vehicle for achieving a just and durable settlement to the Arab-Israeli conflict. But, he said, there is need to prepare for such conference in which all main parties should be represented because such a conference holds a good chance for a peaceful settlement of the Gulf crisis.

The Arab-Israeli conflict is still unresolved after many years of conflict and the injustice that has befallen the peoples of the region still exists, Hurd said. He said that further efforts on the part of the world community are needed to solve the issue.

On Jordanian-British relations Hurd said that despite the fact that the two countries differ in their views on their analysis of the Gulf crisis, they maintain good relations and pursue dialogue on the issue which is very important for Britain.

Saddam

(Continued from page 1)

from this situation, which allows it to continue to occupy our lands and plot to expand."

Tuesday is the U.N. deadline for Iraq to give up Kuwait or face a possible military attack to drive it out.

Assad offered to send the Syrian army to act as a buffer force to protect Iraqi troops from American attack if Iraq decides to withdraw.

Saddam expressed a willingness to talk with Assad, but insisted the Iraqi army needed no protection and was ready to fight.

"I couldn't imagine that you like (Egyptian President) Hosni Mubarak and the others think that we need protection in order for our army to surrender. The Iraqi army is capable and ready to

defend Iraq and the honour of the nation," Saddam said.

"If you want to talk and define everybody's commitment, we are ready to do that in a correct way...." he said.

Saddam said if Assad joined the believers, "you will see the whole background of the issues in a different way and realize that the one who withdraws from the alliance of believers ... will crumble down."

He accused Mubarak of joining the anti-Arab coalition, "for a disgraceful down payment paid by the U.S." Washington forgave Egypt's \$7 billion military debts after it joined the anti-Iraq alliance.

INA quoted Saddam as telling Japanese Socialist leader Takao Doi and an accompanying delegation: "We believe that the way for security and stability in the region lies in giving Palestine back to its people and the Arabs all their usurped rights..."

"One standard should be followed, not two... it is then that we will feel safe and security and stability prevail in the region," Saddam was quoted as telling his Japanese visitors.

Saddam referred to Assad in the message as "Your Excellency" and as the president of the Syrian Arab Republic. He also said the Iraq-Syria rift was a lesson from the past and a "great test" for the Arab Nation to learn from.

France is widely seen as an influential player in last-minute diplomatic efforts to convince Iraq to leave Kuwait or face war after midnight Tuesday.

Boulares played down any suggestion of a Franco-Arab peace plan but said the two sides had a wide range of channels to exploit in the peace effort.

"The Arab countries working for peace continue to be optimistic until the last minute," Boulares told reporters.

Boulares said he saw an opening with Mr. Aziz in Amman. Mr. Perez de Cuellar did not focus on the U.N. demand for Iraq's withdrawal from Kuwait, but instead discussed "the Kuwaiti crisis and means of implementing the U.N. resolutions as well as resolving the Palestinian problem," the Arab diplomat told the Jordan Times.

"This is a new development although not necessarily very significant," he said. "It can be considered as an important starting point in the search for means to avert war."

In his airport comments, Perez de Cuellar was asked to describe his mood after his visit to Baghdad.

"I am neither optimistic nor pessimistic," he replied.

The U.N. chief said Saturday that he carried no specific proposals to Iraq but would discuss a wide range of issues ahead of Tuesday's U.N. deadline to Iraq to quit Kuwait for face war.

The Arab diplomat said Arab had received a call from Italian Foreign Minister Gianni Buttafuoco asking him to pave the way for a visit by a European Community (EC) delegation to Iraq before Tuesday.

Arafat said after their meeting that the U.N. chief had a "good chance" of solving the Gulf crisis peacefully.

But he added that the U.S. Congress's Saturday endorsement of military action in the Gulf may undermine Perez de Cuellar's efforts.

"I am surprised how the United States congress votes for war while the U.N. chief is here on a peace mission," Arafat told reporters.

The U.N. chief also met earlier with former Nicaraguan leader Daniel Ortega, who met Saturday night with Saddam.

Arafat told a news conference he did not believe war would erupt despite Tuesday's deadline.

"No war, no war, no war," Arafat said.

"There will not be a war. You can stay in Baghdad," he told

"At the forefront will be the head of the traitor of the two holy shrines who has become a symbol of moral and political decline..."

"The traitor of the two holy shrines" is a term Iraq recently coined as a reference to Fahd's official title as "the custodian of the two holy shrines" in Mecca and Medina.

made "a gesture" that showed he would comply with U.N. resolutions and pull out its troops.

Kaddoumi arrived in Spain

Saturday and told reporters after a meeting with Foreign Minister Francisco Fernandez Ordonez that "hope should not be lost for a peaceful solution in the Gulf World if war broke out."

"I think in all Arab states you are going to have anti-American and anti-Western feelings," he said.

The minister, asked whether he believed Saddam was a "mad man" who saw himself as saviour of the Arab people, Primakov replied:

"No, I can tell you... I've known him for 21 years, 21 years.

That's enough time to figure out what someone is like, whether or not he has some eccentricities.

"I think that man, without a doubt, has a strong will — without a doubt understands the game he is playing," he added.

The commander of the U.S.

navy's Middle East force has accused Iraq of sowing mines in the Gulf, and said U.S.-led forces have detonated 17 in the region since December.

William M. Fogarty said some of the mines apparently broke free from Iraqi defences in the Gulf off the coast of Kuwait in heavy weather.

President Bush, freshly armed with congressional support for the use of force against Iraq, said Saturday that war could still be avoided in the Gulf if Iraq begins a "massive, rapid withdrawal of its troops from Kuwait" before Tuesday.

Bush refused to say what action he would take if Iraq continued to defy withdrawal demands after Tuesday, but said he would be inclined to act "sooner rather than later."

"Let there be no mistake," the president told reporters at the White House after the House and Senate bestowed the war-making authority. "Peace is in everyone's goal. Peace is in everyone's prayers. But it is for Iraq to decide."

Bush said the votes — 250-183 in the House and 52-47 — sent a clear signal that Iraq "cannot scorn the Jan. 15 deadline."

He said congressional authority for peace provided "the best shot for peace" just three days before the deadline.

On the diplomatic front, Mr.

Bush said he viewed Mr. Perez de Cuellar's current trip to Baghdad as the "main initiative out there right now" for defusing the crisis.

Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev "may want to send somebody" to Baghdad, Bush said.

The European Community may decide to do the same, "but I don't know of that for a fact," certain."

United States and other countries that support America," he said.

But Primakov said that if Saddam viewed his position as hopeless, he would choose war.

"Now, if he is sure that the only choice is either to die, or to stand on his knees only to die afterward, he would prefer where everybody loses," he said.

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Arsenal goalkeeper saves the day

LONDON (R) — Arsenal were indebted to goalkeeper David Seaman as they secured a goalless draw at north London rivals Tottenham.

The result extended this season's unbeaten league run to 22 games and kept up the relentless pressure on leaders Liverpool, held 0-0 by Aston Villa and still just a point ahead of Arsenal, although with a game in hand.

Seaman, deputy to England goalkeeper Chris Woods, has conceded only 17 league goals since joining Arsenal last summer and had to be at his best to deny a Tottenham team featuring national team stars Gary Lineker and Paul Gascoigne.

"I don't think I've seen so many chances created against Arsenal for a long time. We should have had four or five goals but their goalkeeper was superb," said Tottenham manager Terry Venables.

His Arsenal counterpart George Graham was more matter-of-fact about Seaman's

heroics.

"If you pay for the best you get the best," he said. Graham invested £1.2 million (\$2.28 million) when he signed the 27-year-old Seaman from Queen's Park Rangers.

It is proving a remarkable season for Arsenal who have amazingly yet to top the table despite their unbeaten record.

Their title bid has been hit by the deduction of two points for their part in a brawl in a game with Manchester United three months ago and they are currently without captain Tony Adams, serving a prison sentence for drunken driving.

Yet they still hound Liverpool at the top, kindling dreams of emulating the Arsenal side of 1971 which won the coveted League Championship and Football Association (F.A.) Cup double.

They face resurgent Leeds United at home in the next round of the F.A. Cup and will be mindful of their ignominious

League Cup exit in November when Manchester United came to London and routed them 6-2.

Tottenham's own title hopes have founders after a run of only one win in the last eight league games.

"I was happy with the way we played and I thought it was a very good game. There was applause for both sets of players at the end of the game and it was well merited," he said.

Quality goalkeeping from Villa's Nigel Spink and Liverpool's Bruce Grobbelaar helped ensure a black scoreline.

Lineker's only goal in the last seven outings has come from the penalty spot.

Champions Liverpool are showing signs of travel sickness.

Their 0-0 draw at Villa Park means they have picked up only two points from their last four away games in the league and it took a last minute own goal to save them from an embarrassing F.A. Cup exit at second division Blackburn Rovers last week.

But manager Kenny Dalglish,

deprived through injury of experienced internationals Peter Beardsley, Ronnie Whelan and Ray Houghton, was satisfied with his team's latest performance.

"I was happy with the way we played and I thought it was a very good game. There was applause for both sets of players at the end of the game and it was well merited," he said.

Quality goalkeeping from Villa's Nigel Spink and Liverpool's Bruce Grobbelaar helped ensure a black scoreline.

With Liverpool and Arsenal drawing, third-placed Crystal Palace made up some ground with a 1-0 win at bottom of the table Sheffield United.

Mark Bright scored the winner to put Palace four points behind Liverpool and bring relief to his manager Steve Coppell.

"When you face a team at the bottom it's like approaching a cornered cat. You never know what is going to happen," Coppell said.

Hungarian breaks 2nd world swimming record

PERTH, Australia (R) — Hungary's Tamás Darnyi shattered his second world record in six days and became the first man to break the two-minute barrier in the 200 metres individual medley at the World Swimming Championships Sunday.

Darnyi, who carved 2.39 seconds from his own world 400 individual medley mark Tuesday, surpassed the 200 medley record of American Dave Wharton as he retained his second world title at the Superdrome.

The Hungarian clocked one minute 59.36 seconds to beat the 2:00.11 set in Tokyo in August 1989 by Wharton, who failed to qualify for Sunday's final.

Sweden's Jan Bidman led on the opening butterfly length, with the Hungarian third, but Darnyi took over on the backstroke and surged ahead of world record schedule.

The Olympic champion consolidated his advantage on the breaststroke and sped on to victory in the final freestyle length.

American Eric Namensik, second to Darnyi in the 400 individual medley, took silver again in 2:02.87. Germany's Christian Gessner claimed the bronze in 2:02.36.

It was the fifth world record to fall in the 11-day championships. Darnyi's compatriot Norbert Rozsa broke the 100 metres breaststroke record and Americans Mike Barrowman and Marvin Smith the 200 breaststroke and 200 butterfly respectively.

China's Zhuang Yong raced off with the women's 50 metres freestyle in a desperately close tussle in which the first three were separated by just 0.03 of a second.

Zhuang, Olympic 100 freestyle silver medalist, was fast away and held off the challenge of American Leigh-Ann Fetter and French European champion Catherine Plewinski.

Zhuang won in 25.47 while Fetter and Plewinski, who made up a lot of late ground, dead-heated for second place in 25.50.

It was China's fourth swimming title following the women's individual medley double of Lin Li and the 100 butterfly gold of Qian Hong.

Plewinski was denied gold for the third time after setting the fastest qualifying mark on each occasion. She took silver in the 100 freestyle and bronze in the 100 butterfly.

In the women's final Czechoslovakia's Jana Novotna defeated second seed Spain's Arantxa Sanchez Vicario 6-4, 6-2 in a game which saw eight break points and a string of uncharacteristic unforced errors by Sanchez.

Sanchez broke sixth seed Novotna in the first game of both sets, but handed back her leads by dropping serve five times.

Although the Spaniard placed 78 per cent of her first serves in, she notched up 29 unforced errors in the ninth game of the second set.

But Forget's power dominated and another ace by the Frenchman in the next game set up a fifth championship point.

Seconds later Forget sent another ace down the centre of the court to seal the match and become the third Frenchman to win the open. Yannick Noah won last year and Henri Leconte took the event in 1985.

After the match Forget, who won 78 per cent of her first serves in, she notched up 29 unforced errors.

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After

Economy

Economists predict U.S. interest rates to decline

WASHINGTON (R) — Interest rates in the United States are likely to tumble, economists predict, because few other remedies are available to spur the U.S. economy out of recession.

Economists say the Bush administration is virtually unable to offer any stimulative spending programmes because its deficit is spiralling higher, public debt has reached gigantic proportions and war could be at hand in the Gulf.

The Federal Reserve Board (Fed) has steadily lowered interest rates as the economy's vigour faded and may feel freer to lower them again amid signs that inflation is easing.

Lower food and energy costs pulled wholesale prices down by 0.6 per cent in December, the first drop in eight months, as the recession started holding back price rises.

"The Fed funds rate could be down to six per cent by the end of March," Prudential-Bache Securities analysts Ed Yardeni and Debbie Johnson said in a commentary.

The budget for fiscal 1992, to

be presented to Congress Feb. 4, is expected to put the deficit for the year starting Oct. 1, heading to \$300 billion or more, leaving President George Bush little or no ground for initiatives.

Bush has said he will have some proposals for easing recession's bite in his State of the Union message to Congress on Jan. 29, but he avoided stirring much hope.

"What I'm going to do about it is to propose ... a broad approach to economic matters that will, I think, enhance growth," Bush said. "But I have no plans to spend a lot of new federal dollars in order to accelerate recovery."

My guess is the State of the Union will be mostly fluff," said Lawrence Chimerine, a senior economic counsellor with DRI, McGraw-Hill Inc. in Lexington, Mass.

"If he does not have a capital gains tax cut in there, then there likely will be some other kind of growth-oriented tax cut. But it is likely to be minor and to have little impact on the economy," he added.

Economic downturn, Gulf crisis overshadow diamond market

LONDON (AP) — The worldwide economic downturn, high interest rates and the Gulf crisis made for a lackluster diamond market in 1990, figures released by the De Beers diamond cartel showed.

Sales of rough, uncut diamonds rose two per cent to \$4.17 billion last year, from \$4.09 billion in 1989. De Beers' marketing arm, the Central Selling Organisation said.

It termed 1990 "a year of consolidation" and said the sales were satisfactory.

However, the sales fell in real terms — after inflation.

Sales also dropped 32 per cent in the second half of the year from the robust first half, because of the international economic climate and the Gulf crisis, the organisation said. It said it curtailed diamond supplies as a result.

"Broadly speaking, we feel that's pretty good, considering what's happening," said Bill Lear, a director of the London-based organisation. "But it is clearly a real drop."

Officials for what is formally known as De Beers Consolidated Mines Ltd. said the outlook was uncertain, because of the continuing Middle East turmoil — which has undetermined

consumer confidence by propelling oil prices, and thus inflation, higher.

However, the new 10 per cent luxury tax that went into effect in the United States on Jan. 1 won't have a large effect, one diamond expert predicted.

The Central Selling Organisation markets 80 per cent of the world's diamond production, which comes to about 100 million carats a year.

1990 was a second less-than-glorious year. Sales fell two per cent in 1989, after large gains of 35 per cent in 1988 and 19 per cent in 1987.

The recession in the United States had a big impact in 1990, said Martin Rapaport, who produces the New York-based Rapaport Diamond Report industry newsletter.

The United States, the world's largest diamond consumer, buys about a third of all polished stones set in diamond jewelry, De Beers says.

"The United States market is a major problem," Rapaport said. "We're sitting here with

prices since it began announcing

prices in 1984."

De Beers hasn't reduced

prices since it began announcing

prices in 1984."

Asked about the yen's exchange rate against the U.S. dollar, Kyodo said, 52 per cent

expected the dollar to fall to 125-130 yen during the year. The dollar closed 1990 at 135.40, down from 143.30 a year earlier.

Kyodo said 67 per cent predicted that the Tokyo Stock Exchange's key index, the 225-share Nikkei stock average, would not climb above 30,000 points. It ended 1990 trading at 23,848.71, down from 38,915.87 at the end of 1989. It fell to 20,221.86 last Oct. 1.

The same percentage forecast no improvement in Japan's labour shortage in 1991, Kyodo added.

It said 72 per cent expected a peaceful resolution of the Gulf crisis, but 54 per cent predicted no major harm to the Japanese economy if war did break out.

On one of the major U.S.-Japan trade issues, 86 per cent predicted Japan would partially lift its ban on imports of foreign rice, Kyodo reported.

The chief executive officers

responded to a questionnaire

sent out in mid-December. It did

not cite a margin of error for its

poll. Japanese pollsters do not

calculate such margins, claiming

that publication of a precise margin of error might mislead

readers into thinking a poll is more

accurate than it really is.

Jordanian project gets \$3m loan

JEDDAH (AP) — The Islamic Development Bank (IDB) has approved new grants and loans totaling \$42.32 million for a number of member states, bank sources announced Saturday. The allocations from the bank were in the form of interest-free loans, special assistance and non-refundable grants. Gambia will get \$1.2 million to cover the hard currency needed to expand and refurbish a health centre. The Moroccan corporation in charge of exploitation of maritime wealth will obtain \$2.5 million to purchase a fishing boat. The Qatar Islamic Bank will get a credit line of \$10 million to finance small and medium-size projects in Qatar. Jordan will get a loan of \$3 million to finance the construction of a specialised hospital for the treatment of cancer.

But a budget agreement between the White House and Congress means he must offset any capital gains tax cuts either with domestic spending cuts or with tax increases elsewhere.

The Fed has lowered the federal funds rate which banks charge each other for overnight loans five times since July, bringing it down a total of 1.25 percentage points to 6.75 per cent and thus lowering borrowing costs for banks.

Last month it also cut the discount rate — the rate at which banks borrow from the central bank — to 6.5 per cent.

Some reports suggest a debate is under way within the Fed about the wisdom of continuing to cut interest rates for fear of fuelling inflation.

But, with unemployment rising and banks wary about lending to heavily-indebted consumers and businesses, economists feel rates must keep falling until banks start lending again.

They say any other course might aggravate the slowdown and put more people out of work.

G-7 economic officials to discuss Gulf and Soviet Union this month

WASHINGTON (R) — Economic policymakers from major industrial nations are expected to explore ways of sheltering the world economy from the triple threat of war in the Gulf, a crack-up of the Soviet Union and a global recession when they meet later this month.

International monetary sources said finance ministers and central bankers from the powerful Group of Seven (G-7) are putting the finishing touches on arrangements for a January meeting in New York.

A final date for the meeting has not yet been set, but Jan. 20 has been widely mentioned as most likely.

Monetary sources said G-7 nations are likely to discuss the crisis in the Gulf, economic instability in the Soviet Union and

coordination of economic policy when they meet.

Policymakers from many of the seven have sought to portray the meetings as routine, saying it was usual for representatives from Britain, Canada, France, Italy, Japan, the United States and West Germany to get together early in the year.

But the gathering will be anything but routine if Iraq refuses to pull out of Kuwait by the Jan. 15 deadline set by the United Nations and war breaks out in the Gulf.

The World Bank has forecast that oil prices would shoot to \$65 per barrel in the event of a war.

That would probably trigger turmoil on world currency and financial markets and send the global economy into a tailspin.

The world economy is already

looking shaky, with three of the G-7 — Britain, Canada, and the United States — already in a recession.

Some monetary sources said that Germany could come also under some pressure at the meeting to put its fiscal and monetary policies into better balance.

The German government is shelling out billions of marks to pay for the unification of east and west, while the country's central bank is keeping interest rates high to fend off inflation from an overheated economy.

France has made no secret of its desire for a change in the policy mix in Germany, criticising monetary policy there as overly tight and fiscal policy as overly lax.

Analysts expect airlines, chemical firms to suffer most from long Gulf war

LONDON (R) — Airlines and chemical firms would suffer most from a long war in the Gulf, but it could prove a windfall for aerospace and defence firms, analysts have said.

A prolonged war could send fuel prices soaring, pushing up the cost of manufacturing, they said.

A short war could lead to weaker oil prices and renew global economic confidence.

George Hodgson, equity strategist at merchant bank Warburgs, said a short war would not have much direct impact on company earnings. But a protracted conflict would hurt companies by damaging confidence in a world economy already slowing sharply.

He said airlines would be among the hardest hit by war, with rising jet fuel prices, falling demand and the threat of terrorism.

Conversely, defence companies could be aided by stronger orders in the Middle East, which could replace some of the losses suffered as East-West tensions declined over the past year and military budgets were pared back.

Bob Bucknell, airline analyst at stockbrokers Smith New Court, said the impact of higher

oil prices would be blunted by the fact that many airlines had already bought their fuel for the next six months.

But the already weakened airline sector is more vulnerable to falling demand, he said, noting Americans in particular had shown reluctance to travel when Middle East tensions were high.

Michael Simmonds, head of European equity strategy at stockbrokers Yamaichi, said people tended to spend more time at home in times of war.

The stay-at-home trend would not only hurt airlines but could also affect consumer spending habits, pressuring already weak retail spending, he said. Britain and the United States have seen sharp slowdowns in the stores sector.

A short war of eight weeks or so would be only a blip for companies' earnings prospects," Simmonds said, adding that the main impact would be on oil-dependent industries such as chemicals, cement and glass-making.

Some multinationals, such as Britain's Imperial Chemical Industries, could be cushioned from the impact of a war by a surge in the value of the dollar — a traditional crisis bolt-hole for investors.

Japanese businessmen foresee economic slowdown in 1991

TOKYO (AP) — Most Japanese

businessmen responding to a new poll foresee Japan's stretch of economic expansion, now 49 months old, ending sometime in 1991, Kyodo News Service has reported.

Kyodo said that in its survey of the chief executive officers of 100 major companies 71 per cent expected a downturn by the end of the year, although 38 per cent predicted the expansion would last into the year's second half.

If it continues through August, the expansion would match Japan's post-World War II record of 57 months, set between October 1965 and July 1970.

Those expecting a downturn in late 1991 said Japan's economy would suffer from higher interest rates, weaker capital spending and a downturn in the U.S. economy.

Kyodo said 71 per cent forecast 1991 economic growth of between 3.5 and 4.0 per cent.

The government has predicted 3.8 per cent growth in fiscal 1991, starting in April, compared with the anticipated 3.2 per cent in fiscal 1990.

The cartel says it seeks long-term stability and prosperity for the industry. By stockpiling diamonds during downturns, it avoids price fluctuations that it says would undermine public confidence in the value of the precious gems.

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expected the dollar to fall to 125-130 yen during the year. The dollar closed 1990 at 135.40, down from 143.30 a year earlier.

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Baker: Lithuania crackdown endangers U.S.-Soviet ties

ANKARA (R) — U.S. Secretary of State James Baker said Sunday that Moscow's use of force in Lithuania would endanger the U.S.-Soviet partnership.

In a tough statement issued to reporters on his plane, Baker said: "It's hard for me... to understand how force can be used, especially now, to suppress newly emerging democratic institutions."

Baker said he was deeply disturbed and saddened by the reported death of 13 people killed by Soviet troops and tanks in the Lithuanian capital of Vilnius.

"Enduring U.S.-Soviet cooperation, indeed partnership, depends on continued reform — for partnership is impossible in the absence of shared values," Baker said in a statement handed to reporters as he landed in Ankara.

Baker said the use of force by the Soviet government "fundamentally and tragically contradicts the basic principles of perestroika, glasnost and democratisation."

"Perestroika is based on the rule of law, not rule by force," Baker said.

Senate rebukes Gorbachev

In Washington, the U.S. Senate has adopted a resolution calling on Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev to refrain from "unacceptable coercive tactics" against the Baltic republics.

The resolution was adopted early Saturday, several hours be-

fore residents in the capital of Lithuania reported that gunfire erupted, tanks were seen roaring down city streets and the separatist republic's radio and television went off the air early Sunday.

The Senate vote came during a break in a debate on President George Bush's request for authority to use force against Iraq. There was no recorded vote on the Soviet resolution.

The resolution, sponsored by Senate Republican leader Robert Dole, Democratic leader George Mitchell and Democrat Bill Bradley, stated that Moscow had deployed troops in Lithuania and had begun to use force to impose its rule.

It called on Gorbachev "to refrain from further use of coercive tactics against the democratically elected governments of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia."

NATO discusses Lithuania

In Brussels, NATO allies met in emergency session Sunday to discuss the Soviet crackdown in Lithuania, alliance sources said.

The sources told Reuters senior officials from all 16 Western allies had met Saturday and were meeting again Sunday.

"We must explain clearly to the Soviet Union that our aid is conditional," Eyskens told Belgian Television. "We have a means of pressure," he said, adding that the aid programme may be reviewed.

Both NATO and the European Community last week urged Moscow not to use force

or intimidation in the Baltic republics, which want to break away from Soviet rule.

EC condemns crackdown

In Luxembourg, the European Community (EC) Sunday strongly condemned the Soviet military intervention in rebel Lithuania and demanded an explanation.

Luxembourg, which currently holds the rotating EC presidency, said in a statement: "With consternation we learned of the bloody events that took place last night in Vilnius... in the name of the Community and its member states, the presidency strongly condemns the use of force."

"The presidency is waiting for explanations from Soviet authorities," it said.

The EC particularly wants an explanation "about the authorities who gave the order to fire on unarmed civilians," the spokesman said.

Belgian Foreign Minister Mark Eyskens said the EC should reconsider its billion-dollar aid package to the Soviet Union.

The spokesman told Reuters that Bonn was concerned at overnight events in the rebel Baltic republic where at least 13 people died and over 100 were injured when Soviet troops stormed the radio and television centre in Vilnius.

Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher was in constant touch with French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas and the German Foreign Ministry had set up a special unit to follow developments in Lithuania, the spokesman added.

Tanks drive over crowds in Vilnius

VILNIUS (R) — Doctor Yelena Bezzetskaya held up the passport of the man whose abdomen had been crushed by a Soviet tank roaring through the streets of Lithuania's capital.

Then, her face grim and drawn, she pounded her fist into her lap and burst into tears.

"If I were a young person, I would never serve the state again, not as a doctor not as anything," she said.

Lithuanian officials say 11 people were killed and more than 100 injured when Soviet troops backed by tanks stormed the breakaway republic's main television and radio station in the early hours Sunday.

Later, rows of soldiers illuminated by searchlights stood on a rise next to the city's occupied television tower, their work completed two hours after tanks mowed straight at young people mowed five metres deep to protect the installation.

Around the tower, on the western edge of Vilnius, I watched as thousands of pro-independence Lithuanians milled around tanks shaking their fists and screaming abuse at the troops who fired volleys after volleys into the air.

Dozens of injured people were loaded into ambulances, their cries of pain almost drowned out by the roar of tank motors and the crackle of submachine-guns as soldiers fired into the air.

"I thought at first I would be a hero and stand my ground and that they wouldn't run me down," 38-year-old Antanas

Sakalauskas, both his legs crushed, said from a hospital bed.

"The tank tracks went over both my legs. I'm sure there were about four other people underneath. People screamed for the tanks to stop but they drove straight on."

Not all Vilnius residents denounced the army action — notably members of the vocal Russian minority generally opposed to Lithuanian independence.

"There's nothing wrong with what they're doing," said a middle-aged Russian who answered my knock in an apartment building near the tower only to slam it in my face. "They have to restore order. The Lithuanians were getting it all wrong."

Steponaitis Rumeis, one of 11 guards manning positions inside the tower, said he knew of only three people who got out safely.

"They smashed the windows and suddenly the soldiers just jumped in and fired everywhere into the crowd," he said. "I saw at least two dead."

Pungent tear-gas billowed through the cobbled streets of the town. One light truck was reduced to a tangled mass of metal after colliding with a tank.

Western correspondents were manhandled by troops and much of their equipment confiscated.

A cameraman for Britain's ITN was frogmarched into the tower but later released. A crewmember of the U.S. NBC network was thrown against a wall by five paratroopers.

"Occupiers bastards" young

people screamed in Russian at young servicemen, their voices drowned out by megaphones aboard cars telling residents the small pro-Moscow "Committee of National Salvation" had taken control of government.

Nationalist activists placed dozens of buses in front of the parliament building to pre-empt any move against it. Row upon row of tulips, each in a tin can, honoured the dead.

"We just feel so bitter, so horrified to think that they could sweep us away. They're animals, fascists," said one weeping teenage girl.

"We feed them and they shoot us," grunted a man, referring to the tanks.

"I think he had several Van Goghs, a Rembrandt and a Da Vinci, I think," said Leslie Hindman, whose auction house in March will sell a Van Gogh found in a Wisconsin couple's home.

"He's sending photos, but you know, it's kind of silly," she said. "We've had calls from people who think they have Renoir, Monet, Van Goghs — it's hilarious."

A soldier raised his rifle butt and pushed it into my face and I was pushed aside," he said.

"One of the tanks ran straight over a man and must have killed him. They then moved forward, firing from turrets backed by paratroopers on foot."

Flare rockets smashed huge window panes, sending shards of glass cascading down onto the thousands of young demonstrators, causing severe gashes.

"The tanks then drove straight at the crowd and the battle was launched to clear the perimeter around the tower," he said. "No one knows what they did inside the tower."

Column 10

More 'masterpieces' appear since Van Gogh discovery

CHICAGO (AP) — Set off by the discovery of a previously unknown painting by Dutch master Vincent Van Gogh, calls are pouring in to an auction house by people convinced that they, too,

have an old master's work tucked away in their closet. A Florida man called to say he had several Van Goghs, a Rembrandt and a Da Vinci, I think," said Leslie Hindman, whose auction house in March will sell a Van Gogh found in a Wisconsin couple's home.

"He's sending photos, but you know, it's kind of silly," she said. "We've had calls from people who think they have Renoir, Monet, Van Goghs — it's hilarious."

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"The tanks then drove straight at the crowd and the battle was launched to clear the perimeter around the tower," he said. "No one knows what they did inside the tower."

"They're really funny: I'm not going to tell you anything, I'm not going to tell you where I live," Hindman said. The Van Gogh authenticated by Dutch authorities may bring about \$500,000 at auction, even though it is considered to be a minor work, Hindman said. It is owned by a suburban Milwaukee couple who asked not to be identified. Hindman said she plans to check all of the clues she is now receiving.

Marcos paintings fetch top prices

NEW YORK (AP) — Paintings by El Greco and Raphael reached the top prices at an auction of master paintings once owned by the late Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos and his wife, Imelda, auctioneers said. The sale realised 15.4 million, well above the high estimate of \$10 million, said Susan Britman, a spokeswoman for Christie's auction house. earlier, the Marcoses' former collection of antique silver brought nearly 5 million. "Across the board, there were excellent prices," she said. All 98 paintings sold. Seventy-four of the paintings were put on the auction block by the Philippine government, the rest by the U.S. government. El Greco's oval oil painting, titled The Coronation of the Virgin, was bought by an anonymous bidder for \$2.3 million. The Justice Department seized the El Greco and other paintings in 1987 in France from Saudi financier Adnan Khashoggi during an investigation that led to the indictment of Khashoggi and the Marcoses.

They also blamed police for failing to provide adequate security despite being warned that an attack on the funeral vigil was possible. Some witnesses said there were no police patrols in the hours before the attack.

Police said units guarding the vigil left before the shooting at the request of the ANC.

South African police arrest 10 suspects after township massacre

JOHANNESBURG (AP) — Police have arrested 10 people in connection with an attack on an African National Congress (ANC) funeral vigil that killed 35 people, the government announced Sunday.

Law and Order Minister Adrian Vlok also said a 9 a.m.-to-4 a.m.-curfew has been imposed on black Soweto township, where Saturday's attack occurred, and that it has been declared an unrest area.

The declaration gives police wide powers to detain people and put down unrest.

Nelson Mandela led an ANC delegation Sunday to Soweto, where police and army vehicles patrolled the dirt township roads.

Police said two women were fatally burned and five houses set on fire in Soweto in apparent revenge attacks for the assault on mourners holding an all-night

vigil for a slain ANC activist.

Saturday's pre-dawn massacre also injured dozens of people, including children, and drew condemnation from the government, black opposition groups and newspapers.

"Either this country opts to meet the future in conditions of relative stability or it slides into anarch, brutalism and slaughter," the Sunday Times said in an editorial. "The warning is obvious: Unless South Africans take steps to end the violence immediately, there is an imminent danger that the country will slip beyond the grasp of moderates."

No details on the identities of the arrested suspects were immediately available.

Vlok said further arrests were expected and that several AK-47 automatic rifles had been seized, including one linked to Saturday's attack.

3 major Sikh groups unite in Punjab

NEW DELHI, India (AP) — Three major Sikh parties have merged in the first attempt at political unity in the prosperous state of Punjab, wracked by eight years of separatist violence.

Press Trust of India (PTI) and United News of India (UNI) said the new party, known as Shriman Akali Dal, will be formed in an attempt to end the violence immediately, there is an imminent danger that the country will slip beyond the grasp of moderates."

No details on the identities of the arrested suspects were immediately available.

Vlok said further arrests were expected and that several AK-47 automatic rifles had been seized, including one linked to Saturday's attack.

At the news conference, Mann said the leaders of the three former factions — Akali Dal-Badal, Akali Dal-Lonewal and Akali Dal-Mann — have authorised him to continue the talks with the government.

A United Akali Dal or Eternal Party, broke up 30 years ago and subsequent splits have left several factions that have worked at cross purposes in Punjab.

Mann said the Shriman Akali Dal, or the Apex Eternal Party, will be called a public rally in Ludhiana on Jan. 26 to protest the "military occupation" of Punjab, the two agencies reported.

The Indian government has sent thousands of troops in Punjab's western districts, which border Pakistan, to ostensibly check infiltration of what the military says is Pakistan-trained militants.

Wailing mourners condemned Qasmi's death and demanded the killers be publicly hanged.

Police are investigating the killing but they said no arrests have been made.

Qasmi was a senior leader of Anjuman-E-Sipah-E-Sabah, or soldiers of Prophet Mohammad's Companions, a Sunni Muslim Shi'ite. Members of the sects have been feuding in Jhang for more than a year and scores on both sides have been killed.

About 90 per cent of Pakistan's 120 million people are Sunni Muslims, while about 5 per cent are Shi'ite.

Pakistan denies India's repeated charges that it is training or arming Sikh militants.

According to government reports the militants killed more than 3,300 people in 1990, the bloodiest year since the insurrection began in 1982. At least 140 people have been killed this month.

On Saturday, UNI and PTI reported 12 people died since Friday night in Punjab. The reports which quoted the police in Chandigarh, 240 kilometres north of New Delhi, said the deaths occurred in eight incidents in several parts of the state.

Sikh separatists claim members of their faith are discriminated culturally and politically by the Hindu-dominated government.

Sikhs are in a slight majority in Punjab, but nationwide they constitute only 2 per cent of India's 880 million people. Hindus account for 82 per cent.

Pakistani coalition sweeps by-elections

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan (AP) — Pakistan's Islamic ruling coalition has won a landslide victory in by-elections held earlier this week, news reports said Saturday.

Polling results were delayed because of the remote location of several of the polling sites, an election commission spokesman said.

The ruling Islamic Orthodox Coalition (IUC) won six seats in the policy-making National Assembly while the Pakistan Peoples Party of former premier Benazir Bhutto took one seat. The other went to a non-independent.

The government also won 11 of the 16 provincial assembly seats being contested. Bhutto's party took two and so did independent candidates.

Police reported that most voting was conducted peacefully.

However, a prominent religious leader and National Assembly member, Esarul Haq Qasmi, member of the parliament, was killed last Thursday.

One person was killed and several shops were burned before police and army troops dispersed the mob shortly after sunset Friday.

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About 90 per cent of Pakistan's 120 million people are Sunni Muslims, while about 5 per cent are Shi'ite.

Up to 50 persons were reportedly killed in the general elections last October. The ruling coalition deal Bhutto's stunning defeat, reducing her party to a weak opposition in the 217-seat assembly.

Ms. Bhutto accused the coalition of poll-rigging, intimidation and influence peddling.

"We knew what was going to happen. We took part in it just to gather evidence in favour of our charges of rigging," Bhutto was quoted as saying in the influential Urdu-language newspaper Jang.

In a separate development, the government deployed the army in the tiny village of Jhang near the capital of Islamabad to quash bloody communal violence between warring Islamic sects, news reports said Saturday.

Relentless firing during the past week has left up to five people dead, including an influential religious leader and member of the parliament.

Several hundred soldiers in machine-gun mounted jeeps be-